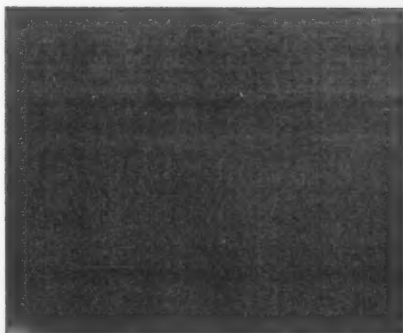




the Orator

Spring 2009

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SYMPOSIUM SHOWCASES ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Participation by First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in the social and economic life of Alberta is essential to a diverse and prosperous province.

That participation will be the focus of **Gathering for Success – Sharing Indigenous Economic Development Strategies** – an international symposium to be held June 28-30 in the breath-taking natural beauty of Banff.

Alberta's Ministry of Aboriginal Relations – in partnership with Treaty 7 Management Corp. – is presenting this unprecedented event at the Fairmont Banff Springs Conference Centre.

The goal of the conference is to increase awareness of indigenous economic development and to present opportunities for enhancing the participation of Aboriginal people in the economy by sharing knowledge, perspective and practices.

"Gathering for Success is an ideal forum for Aboriginal and industry leaders, economic development organizations, policy makers, community planners, educators and others who want practical examples, expert advice and first-hand, relevant information,"

said Aboriginal Relations Minister Gene Zwozdesky. "We anticipate many new partnerships will emerge from this unique event."

The expected 500 provincial, national and international delegates will hear strategies for Aboriginal economic success.

The symposium features 24 sessions on socio-economic development and world-class keynote speakers including Roberta Jamieson, the first Aboriginal woman to earn a law degree in Canada; Chief Clarence Louis from the Osoyoos Band in British Columbia; Dr. Ernesto Sirolli, a global authority on bottom-up economic development; Wilma Mankiller, who was the first female chief of the Cherokee Nation; and others.

The symposium also includes a trade show, cultural showcases, top entertainment and a gala banquet.



GATHERING *for* SUCCESS

SHARING INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

A customized program and special conference price are available for young Aboriginal entrepreneurs aged 18 to 29.

For more information, including easy online registration, visit www.aboriginal.alberta.ca.

Government of Alberta ■
Aboriginal Relations

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY CELEBRATES HERITAGE, CULTURE, ACHIEVEMENTS

June 21 is National Aboriginal Day – a day for all Albertans to join with Canadians from coast to coast to coast to celebrate and embrace the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

Alberta's Ministry of Aboriginal Relations will mark this occasion with an event on June 18 at the Edmonton City Centre mall. This year's celebration features



The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations celebrated National Aboriginal Day 2008 with singing, traditional foods, displays of crafts and dancing by the Métis Little Jiggers. This year's festivities will be held at the Edmonton City Centre mall on June 18.

both traditional and contemporary Aboriginal entertainment, crafts and other displays.

Aboriginal Relations Minister Gene Zwozdesky will present the Ministry's first Aboriginal Quality of Life Award along with a cheque for \$25,000 to recognize the efforts of an individual or organization working to improve social and economic conditions in Aboriginal communities in Alberta.

A number of National Aboriginal Day events are scheduled throughout the province, including:

- The City of Edmonton will honour Aboriginal veterans in its celebrations, which also include dancing and singing and displays of Aboriginal arts and crafts.
- In southern Alberta, celebrations at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump will include Blackfoot entertainers, historians plus workshops featuring story-telling and traditional games.

For more information on National Aboriginal Day events in Alberta, please visit our website at www.aboriginal.alberta.ca and follow the National Aboriginal Day link.

RESOURCE CONSULTATION POLICY AND GUIDELINES UNDER REVIEW

Alberta has a duty to consult with First Nation communities when land and resource management decisions on Crown land may adversely impact Treaty rights.

In 2005, Alberta became the first province to develop and implement a comprehensive resource consultation policy with input from First Nations and industry. Consultation guidelines – which determine how the policy is implemented – were released in September 2006 and revised in November 2007.

As required by legislation, both the policy and the guidelines are being reviewed to assess the approach to consultation and to make any necessary policy changes.

It's a critical step in continuing to develop the consultation process. It also helps to strengthen relationships between Alberta, First Nations and industry, resulting in an improved consultation process for all concerned.

"First Nations partners and industry stakeholders are encouraged to work with Alberta in the review process," said Aboriginal Relations Minister Gene Zwozdesky. "Constructive input from the ground level by First Nations and industry ensures both the policy and the guidelines remain efficient and effective."

The historic *Protocol Agreement on Government-to-Government Relations*, signed in May 2008 commits the Premier to an annual meeting with the Grand Chiefs of the three Treaty areas in Alberta to discuss matters of mutual interest including resource consultation. The first meeting with the Premier and the Grand Chiefs is scheduled for late May.

The Agreement also establishes semi-annual meetings between the Grand Chiefs and Alberta's resource consultation ministers. Discussions at the Feb. 3 and April 21 meetings involved the Chiefs' expectations of the Consultation Policy review and how First Nations would like to be consulted.

"These meetings of the Grand Chiefs, the Premier and the consultation ministers provide all of us with unfiltered insight into each other's thinking on these major issues," said Zwozdesky.

A revised consultation policy and updated guidelines are expected in the spring of 2010.

MINISTER LEARNS FIRST-HAND FROM VISITS TO FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS COMMUNITIES

When the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations was created in March 2008, Minister Gene Zwozdesky made a commitment to visit and/or meet with all Aboriginal communities in Alberta to hear first-hand any issues community leaders wished to raise.

The Minister has visited with all eight Métis Settlements, and with many of the 47 First Nations in Alberta. For instance, he has visited Fort Chipewyan on three separate occasions. He has also met with the Métis Nation of Alberta and some individual locals.

"We are working collaboratively with Aboriginal communities to address their concerns," Zwozdesky said.

In addition, Aboriginal Relations staff have been in regular contact with the leaders of these communities by mail, phone calls and through in-person visits.

MINISTERS SEEK TO CLOSE GAP BETWEEN ABORIGINAL, NON-ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

Aboriginal Relations Minister Gene Zwozdesky and Education Minister Dave Hancock attended the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) – a historic summit in Saskatoon aimed at eliminating the education achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

In their visionary *Learn Canada 2020* document, CMEC ministers reaffirmed their commitment to work with their Aboriginal and federal colleagues to:

- eliminate the funding gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students;
- address the shortage of quality school infrastructure on-reserve;
- design curricula that better reflect First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) perspectives;

- increase post-secondary education opportunities for Aboriginal students; and
- increase efforts to attract and retain teachers from and for FNMI communities.

"Nothing is more fundamental to the future of our province than education," said Hancock. "I am committed to working in full partnership with leaders of First Nations and Métis communities to ensure every child has the opportunity to succeed."

Zwozdesky noted, "Aboriginal people have a vital role to play in the future of Alberta. We must work effectively to help improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students."

A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

"I am proud we have achieved many significant milestones since Premier Stelmach created the stand-alone Ministry of Aboriginal Relations. I look forward to more achievements in the coming year largely because of the dedicated staff in my Ministry."

– Hon. Gene Zwozdesky

2008

- March 12** Ministry of Aboriginal Relations created
- May 22** *Protocol Agreement on Government-to-Government Relations* signed by Premier Ed Stelmach and leadership of Treaties 6, 7 and 8
- June 19** Seven-year funding agreement with Métis Nation of Alberta signed
- June 21** Ministry hosts National Aboriginal Day events
- Sept. 18** \$18 million, three-year interim funding agreement with Métis Settlements General Council signed
- Sept. 22** Minister honoured by being named Chief Running Wolf by Blood Tribe
- Nov. 4** \$4.3 million Community Development Trust Initiative funding to aid communities hit by resource industry downturn

2009

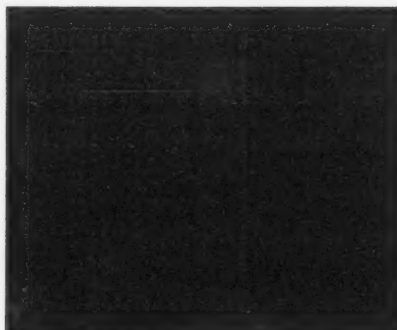
- Feb. 3** First Treaty Chiefs-Consultation Ministers meeting held under *Protocol Agreement*
- Feb. 10** "Gathering for Success" International Symposium, for Aboriginal Economic Success Strategies highlighted in Government's Speech From the Throne
- Feb. 24** First National Aboriginal Education Summit
- Feb. 27** Minister's Aboriginal Quality of Life Award announced
- April 21** Second Treaty Chiefs-Consultation Ministers meeting
- May 20** First Treaty Chiefs-Premier government-to-government meeting held under *Protocol Agreement*



Aboriginal Relations Minister Gene Zwozdesky and Deputy Minister Maria David-Evans celebrated the Ministry's first birthday on March 13, 2009 with department employees.

FIRST NATIONS ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVE ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE

The First Nations Economic Partnerships Initiative is designed to help increase First Nations participation in the economy by supporting development of effective partnerships between First Nations, industry, government and other stakeholders. Since 2005, FNEPI has supported 116 partnerships with 31 First Nations, nine Tribal Councils and numerous industry partners and other organizations. The 2007-08 FNEPI annual report is now available on our website at www.aboriginal.alberta.ca. Follow the link to the First Nations Economic Partnerships Initiative.



ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

A sampling of Aboriginal events across Alberta

MAY 11-12

Aboriginal Health Conference
Calgary

www.edo.ca/datamodules/events/show/6_492

MAY 16

Esquao Awards

www.iaaw.ca/esquao-awards.htm

MAY 21-23

Languages without Borders
Edmonton

www.caslt.org/conference_en.pr

JUNE 2-6

Dreamspeakers International Aboriginal
Film & Television Festival
Edmonton

www.dreamspeakers.org/

JUNE 3-4

Circle For Aboriginal Relations Conference
Enoch

www.cfarsociety.ca

JUNE 13-14

Aboriginal Gathering and Powwow
Peace River

JUNE 18

Ministry of Aboriginal Relations National
Aboriginal Day celebrations
Edmonton

www.aboriginal.alberta.ca

JUNE 20

Nechi Institute 35th Anniversary Graduation
St. Albert

www.nechi.com/35/

JUNE 20-21

World Chicken Dance Championships
Siksika Nation

www.blackfootcrossing.ca/chicken_dance.html

JUNE 21

National Aboriginal Day
Across Alberta

www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ach/ev/nad/index-eng.asp

JUNE 19-24

National Aboriginal Day events
Edmonton

www.edmonton.ca/aboriginal

JUNE 28-30

Gathering for Success – Sharing Indigenous
Economic Development Practices
Banff

www.gatheringforsuccess.ca

JULY 21-23

General Assembly of the Assembly of First Nations
Calgary

www.afn.ca

JULY 17-19

Grand Old North American Fiddle Championship
Radway

<http://wildrosefiddlers.org/contest.html>

JULY 18

Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park
Siksika Nation

www.blackfootcrossing.ca

JULY 25-27

Delia Michif Gathering
Delia

<http://deliamichif.homestead.com/Gathering.html>

JULY 30-AUG. 3

Canadian Native Fastball Championships
Whitecourt

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ABORIGINAL RELATIONS
COMMUNICATIONS BRANCH
780-422-2462
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